

## **Digital-to-Analog Converter Box Assistance Program Frequently Asked Questions**

### Digital Television Transition

#### **What is Digital Television (DTV) and why are television broadcasters transitioning to DTV?**

Digital television (DTV) is revolutionizing the television marketplace, offering improved service quality, greater service innovation, and new capabilities not currently available from the analog broadcast television service. DTV will allow broadcasters to offer viewers better image and sound quality and also more programming choices.

There are other benefits to the nation as well. The DTV service is designed to use radio spectrum more efficiently than the current analog service. Therefore, upon completion of the DTV transition, the Federal Government will reclaim and reassign analog broadcast television spectrum to other important uses, including public safety and advanced wireless services.

#### **When will the DTV transition be completed?**

Broadcasters are already using digital channels to offer DTV programming in their local markets all over the United States. On February 18, 2009, full power television stations will stop analog broadcasting and return their analog channels so those channels can be put to other uses.

#### **Will consumers need new equipment to watch broadcast television when the transition is complete?**

When the DTV transition is complete, broadcast television viewers, those who do not subscribe to cable or satellite, will need either a television set capable of receiving DTV programming, or a digital-to-analog converter box. Cable and satellite subscribers may also need additional equipment to view digital programming. For more information, see [www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/digitaltv.html](http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/consumerfacts/digitaltv.html)

### Converter Box Program

#### **What is a digital-to-analog converter box and how do I get one?**

Digital-to-analog converter boxes will make DTV signals viewable on analog TV sets. These converter boxes will be available in retail stores during the transition. The National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) of the U.S. Department of Commerce is developing rules that will allow households to obtain coupons that can be applied toward the purchase of digital-to-analog converter boxes.

### **How do I obtain and redeem converter box coupons?**

During the period from January 1, 2008 to March 31, 2009, a household can request no more than two coupons, each valued at \$40. All coupons will be sent to requesting households via the United States Postal Service. Recipients must redeem the coupons within 3 months of issuance, but may not combine their two coupons toward the purchase of a single converter box.

### **Can you provide more details about the converter box coupon program?**

As you can imagine, there are many other program implementation details to consider. In fact, consumers may ask:

- What is the definition of a "household" eligible to receive coupons under the Digital-to-Analog Converter Box Assistance Program?
- Will NTIA or other federal representatives visit my home to determine my household's eligibility to participate in the program?
- What should I do if I'm denied participation in the program?
- What should I do if I lose my coupons?
- What should I do if my coupons expire before I'm able to redeem them?
- Which DTV converter boxes may I use my coupons to buy?

NTIA has issued a Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) that seeks the public's suggestions on various details of the program's operations, including issues related to these questions. NTIA encourages you to submit your ideas or concerns in response to the NPRM. Please refer to information provided below on how to submit comments to NTIA. NTIA will provide more detailed program information when it finalizes rules for the digital-to-analog converter box assistance program.

### **What is the scope of the NPRM?**

NTIA has identified numerous program implementation questions and issues. We are evaluating a variety of approaches for accepting coupon requests and for making the coupon redemption and reimbursement process simple and convenient for both consumers and retailers. We are also interested in public views on how to minimize waste, fraud and abuse, and how best to reach target communities in our DTV public information effort.

### **When will the converter box proceeding begin and how do I obtain a copy of the NPRM?**

The NPRM was published in the Federal Register on July 25, 2006. Parties will have 60 days from the date of publication to file comments responding to issues and questions raised in the NPRM. The NPRM is posted on the NTIA website at [www.ntia.doc.gov](http://www.ntia.doc.gov).

**How do I submit comments to NTIA?**

NTIA is accepting comments by mail, fax, and e-mail. The NPRM directs commenters to mail comments to: Milton Brown, Office of the Chief Counsel, National Telecommunications and Information Administration, 1401 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Room 4713, Washington, DC 20230. Alternatively, commenters may fax their views to (202) 501-8013 or submit them electronically to [coupon@ntia.doc.gov](mailto:coupon@ntia.doc.gov) or [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov). Please refer to the NPRM for more detailed filing requirements.

**Will comments filed in this NPRM be publicly available?**

NTIA will post the comments on our website at [www.ntia.doc.gov/ntiahome/frnotices/2006/coupon/comments.htm](http://www.ntia.doc.gov/ntiahome/frnotices/2006/coupon/comments.htm).